

Eco-Community Dialogues Newsletter

Nancy Nelson, Editor

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The Conservation Pledge

I pledge to protect and preserve the natural resources of the planet Earth, and promise to promote education so we may become caretakers of our air, water, land, forest, and wildlife.

Rethink Environmental Folklore

Another must-see Ted Talk posted last month. Search for "Leyla Acaroglu: Paper beats plastic? Howto rethink environmental folklore" at www.Ted.com.

Monarchs, Meadows, and NAVDANYA

NAVDANYA was co-founded by Vandana Shiva to promote organic farming and seed saving. The organization has over 70,000 farmer members. Ms. Shiva teaches people from all walks of life to garden, as the most important way of healing violence.

If you would you like to attract pollinators to your garden, starter kits of both caterpillar host plants and butterfly nectar sources can be purchased from www.MonarchWatch.org. Planting a starter kit allows you to certify your butterfly habitat as an official MONARCH WAY STATION and you can continue to learn more about raising MONARCHS and treating their diseases at www.learnaboutmonarchs.com.

The NORTH AMERICAN BUTTERFLY ASSOCIATION at www.nababutterfly.com can help you learn about all aspects of butterfly gardening, including how to certify your garden. It rates plants as either host or nectar sources.

It is important to remember that butterflies are first caterpillars that need host plants such as Asters, the Carrot Family, Cottonwood trees, Fennel, Goldenrod, Grasses, Mallows, Milkweed, Parsley, Pearly Everlasting, the Pea Family, Poplar trees, Thistle, Willow trees, and Violets.

Some nectar plants that attract butterflies and hummingbirds include: Asters, Bee Balm, Black-eyed Susan, Cosmos, Coreopsis, Daisies, Fennel, Galardia, Heliotrope, Joe Pye Weed, Lantana, Lavenders, Liatris, Mallows, Marigolds, Marjoram, Milkweeds, Oregano, Parsley, Purple Coneflower, Rue, Sedum, Sunflowers, Thistle, Thymes, Verbena, Yarrow, and Zinnias.

(Sources: Winter 2014, YES MAGAZINE, "Freedom Starts with a Seed" by Vandana Shiva; Janet Rodkey with the Ashland, OREGON, Garden Club)

The Sprit of Balance and a Sound Mind

Aren't you glad that the EUROPEAN UNION checks for 50 drug residues, requires labeling for GMO/GE food, bans Bisphenol-A (BPA) in baby bottles, bans gestation crate confinement cages for breeding sows, bans the use of antiseptic washes on meat, bans antibiotics used to promote growth of meat animals, bans beef hormones, bans rBGH biotech hormone used on dairy cattle, bans Atrazine herbicide, bans three types of Neonotinoid pesticides, and bans the use of antibiotics in organically farmed fruit trees. *Three cheers.*

(Source: Winter 2014, YES MAGAZINE, "Beyond GMO's: U.S. Food That Europe Won't Touch")

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OREGON'S First Offshore Wind Farm

Offshore wind energy farming could become a cutting edge industry for Coos Bay, OREGON. The proposal is for five floating wind turbines to be deployed 15 miles from shore in about 1400 feet of water. The turbines' power cable will transmit electricity to the mainland. The 30-megawatts will be clean, efficient electricity. JAPAN revved up their floating wind farm off the coast of *Fukushima* last November.

The pilot project for the WEST COAST was announced by U.S. SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR, *Sally Jewel*, Governor *John Kitzhaber* of OREGON, and the BUREAU OF OCEAN ENERGY's Management Director *Tommy Beaudreau*. The federal government auctions leases for ocean sections where these projects can be developed.

Principle Power of Seattle, WASHINGTON received \$4 million from the DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY for the project, and the BUREAU OF OCEAN ENERGY MANAGEMENT's environmental analysis will be completed, with opportunity for public comment, before the proposal is finalized.

(Source: February 6, 2014, MAIL TRIBUNE, "Offshore wind farm project announced" by *Gosia Wozniacka*, The Associated Press, PORTLAND, Ore)

The Livermore National Lab

After World War II, the *Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory* was founded to design nuclear weapons. Located in the Bay Area city of *Livermore*, CALIFORNIA, the lab receives 62% of its \$1.5 billion budget from nuclear weapons work. It has been trying over the last decade to diversify by finding new engineering and scientific expertise, such as focusing on homeland security technology.

For example the lab's *Public Affairs* office defended the \$81,746 research project that the lab conducted for a *National Geographic* documentary on why the *Lusitania* sunk in 1915.

(Source: February 6, 2014, DAILY TIDINGS, "Livermore national lab faulted over *Lusitania* research project", LOS ANGELES)

AMERICA's Worst Cancer Rates Correlate with Uranium

Studies of cancer rates by the U.S. *Indian Health Service* show that the highest cancer rates in AMERICA are in the *Northern Great Plains*. The genocide consists of 2,885 abandoned, open-pit uranium mines in NORTH and SOUTH DAKOTA, MONTANA, and WYOMING, according to a report compiled by the ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY (EPA). The report is entitled, "*Uranium Activities' Impacts on Lakota Territory*" by *Lilias Jarding*, Ph.D.

The *Fort Laramie Treaty* of 1868 promised this region to the *Great Sioux Nation*, but the Indians never gave permission for any of this mining to happen in their *Treaty* territory, which they view as prisoner of war camps.

Engineers and scientists continue to study the NORTHWESTERN corner of SOUTH DAKOTA where the *Cave Hills* mesas are, in order to learn the impacts of past uranium mining. This is *Harding* country, the *Cattle Capitol* of the world. Eventually you will develop a deep understanding of the implications of the radiation levels tested that were found to be 151 times higher than normal background levels.

The *Darrow Pit Mine* is only about 40-miles from MOUNT RUSHMORE, where millions of tourists visit annually. They are breathing in radioactive dust and the water they drink in the motels in *Rapid City*, SOUTH DAKOTA, contains uranium.

Another example of one of our nation's abandoned uranium mines is the *Riley Pass* mine. It is half a mile wide and three quarters of a mile in length.

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There are thousands of other abandoned uranium mines in the GREAT PLAINS, the SOUTHWEST, and NORTHWEST. Thousands of petroglyphs, sacred places, and Indian burial grounds were destroyed when the soil was dug and pushed off cliffs to make the mines.

But the greatest problem being brought to light is that uranium and its decay products pollute the atmosphere with radioactive dust. The wind carries radioactive particles to the EASTERN UNITED STATES.

Abandoned uranium mines have been polluting water with radioactive particles continuously for over 60-years, since the late 1950's and the runoff into the water is on both the surface and underground. The contaminated water flows into the MISSOURI RIVER and on to the MISSISSIPPI RIVER.

Radioactive pollution is cumulative, so that makes the abandoned uranium mines an environmental and a human health concern. When will CONGRESS pass a bill to clean up all of AMERICA's abandoned uranium mines.

(Source: Fall/Winter 2013, PEACE AND FREEDOM, "Abandoned Uranium Mines in the Northern Great Plains" by Charmaine Whiteface, Coordinator of the Defenders of the Black Hills at P.O. Box 2003, Rapid City, SD 57709; defendblackhills.org; Earth Democracy's contact person is Nancy Price at 530.758.0726 in Davis, Ca; nancyprice39@gmail.com)

HANFORD is a Thorn in the Flesh

Senator Ron Wyden (D-Ore) wrote a letter to Ernest Moniz, Energy Secretary for the DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY, wondering whether the HANFORD is being effectively managed. In addition Tom Carpenter of the citizen watchdog group *Hanford Challenge* posits that the DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY's problem is not having new tanks ready for HANFORD's 53 million gallons of high-level radioactive waste, stored in 177 aging underground tanks, many of which have leaked, threatening the groundwater and the neighboring COLUMBIA RIVER.

Actually the HANFORD nuclear waste complex in *Richland*, WASHINGTON, is the most contaminated nuclear site in AMERICA. Clean up efforts cost taxpayers \$2 billion a year already, but once HANFORD's worst radioactive waste gets into the environment, the price for cleaning up the environment is incalculable.

The Big Problem is that in 2012 one of the 28 giant double-walled underground tanks was found leaking. At least six other double-walled tanks share defects with the leaking tank, 13 more double-walled tanks may be compromised, and the final eight remaining have NOT been analyzed. But Tom Fletcher, the Assistant Manager for tank farms, claims the ENERGY DEPARTMENT is in the process of inspecting the final eight.

Meanwhile Donna Busche is the second HANFORD whistle-blower to be fired by URS in recent months and she is filing lawsuit against URS for wrongful termination. She was fired from her job at the HANFORD NUCLEAR RESERVATION where she worked for five years for the URS Corporation, after she raised concerns about the design and safety of an unfinished waste treatment plant at HANFORD.

The URS Corporation is helping to build a \$12 billion plant to turn HANFORD's waste into glass logs for permanent disposal underground, but it has faced lots of delays, cost increases, and technical glitches.

The U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY owns HANFORD and claims it was informed of the firing after the fact, that it was not asked and it did not approve the firing action, and it is investigating Busche's safety concerns. The U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR is reviewing her complaints about retaliation and harassment.

HANFORD was created by the federal government in the 1940's and the waste is from decades of production of plutonium for AMERICA's nuclear weapons arsenal. Building bombs is such a waste!

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(Sources: February 20, 2014, MAIL TRIBUNE, "Whistle-blower who raised Hanford nuclear safety concerns fired" by Nicholas Geranios, The Associated Press, SPOKANE, Wash; March 1, 2014, MAIL TRIBUNE, "Concerns raised about Hanford tanks" by Nicholas Geranios, The Associated Press, SPOKANE, Wash.)

MIT Says Put Safety First

MIT's Center for Energy and Environmental Policy Research cautions the International Nuclear Industry that it should not expect to get another chance if there is another serious nuclear accident anywhere in the world, and to take safety much more seriously.

AUSTRIA, BELGIUM, GERMANY, ITALY, SPAIN, SWEDEN, and SWITZERLAND had already begun phasing out their nuclear power decades before the 2011 Fukushima Daiichi nuclear disaster.

JAPAN has 54 nuclear reactors, with six at Fukushima. But on March 11, 2011, a mega earthquake and tsunami resulted in a calamitous triple meltdown and 100,000 souls who once lived in, or close to, the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant had to be evacuated and may never return. The decommission effort goes beyond trillions of yen. If decontamination is even possible, it could cost \$623 billion or even greater sums, not to mention the price for being exposed to the fallout. Public safety concerns still abound.

After the Fukushima Daiichi disaster, BELGIUM, GERMANY, and SWITZERLAND all moved to decommission their nuclear facilities.

Secretary of State John Kerry hopes JAPAN and the REPUBLIC OF KOREA will put history behind them and relate. Cooperation is needed because of the unpredictable NORTH KOREAN nuclear threat. CHINA is doing positive things to reign in NORTH KOREA's nuclear ambitions, so wouldn't it be wonderful if NORTH KOREA participated in real talks about the future, took steps toward denuclearization, and complied with international obligations. Giving up its nuclear program would ease tensions.

If you are ready to face the facts there are growing public concerns over the safety of nuclear power and what to do with spent fuel because CHINA has another 29 under way, INDIA has seven more being built, and the RUSSIAN Federation has another 11 in the works, and the U.S. federal Nuclear Regulatory Commission approved construction of two new reactors at a nuclear power plant in GEORGIA.

The history of nuclear power is mostly a history of accidents, and the cost of new nuclear plants is prohibitive in much of the world. Nuclear is getting more expensive, whereas solar and wind renewables are getting cheaper.

(Sources: February 13, 2014, DAILY TIDINGS, "Fukushima and the future of nuclear power" by Earth Talk's Roddy Scheer and Doug Moss; www.emagazine.com; www.caseyresearch.com; <http://wib.mit.edu/ceepr/www>; March 10, 2012, THE ECONOMIST, "The Dream that Failed" by Oliver Morton; www.Economist.com/audiovideo/specialreports ; www.Economist.com/specialreports; February 14, 2014, "Kerry Looks to Enlist China's Help on North Korea" by Adam Entous, SEOUL)

Nuclear Power

The NUCLEAR AGE began on the University of Chicago campus, with a tiny nuclear reaction on December 2nd, 1942, under a team led by Enrico Fermi.

The first reactor was designed to do things in as small and safe a way as possible, but the reactors of the wartime nuclear program began in earnest shortly after Fermi's success. The Manhattan Project's only goal was making bombs and using reactors to generate electricity was NOT an early priority.

Making bombs created a need for fissile material, and reactors provided it. Plutonium nuclei are fissile and getting plutonium out of uranium in a reactor was easier than separating uranium isotopes.

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Reactors thus served as plutonium factories, and the early reactors were used exclusively for the purpose of providing fuel for bombs. "Bomb power" has only existed on EARTH since 1945.

It was Hyman Rickover, a submariner, who saw a niche for nuclear power plants in submarines. Rickover settled on a pressurized water reactor, or PWR design because the enrichment systems used to make fuel for such reactors can almost as easily be used to make weapons-grade uranium that bomb-makers need.

This is the technological basis of the stand-off with IRAN's claim that its enrichment facilities are just for reactor fuel. The dark side of nuclear power is nuclear proliferation.

Under Rickover's tutelage, PWRs were offered to electrical utilities as the mainstay of the nuclear power industry as it grew. The world went with the first sort of reactor it saw deployed at scale, and just increased its size. The boiling-water reactors (BWR) at Fukushima Daiichi were of that kind of homogeneity.

More or less the only practical things you can do with a reactor are to make plutonium for bombs, power submarines, produce isotopes used in medicine, and generate heat and electricity. Only the last is Big Business and it can easily be done by other means.

Imagine just renouncing nuclear power. Should regulators have to become less generous in extending the life of existing plants, then they might find they could make nuclear energy regulations more stringent. Just suppose plant operators could be held liable. Instead of a second Nuclear Age, there is necessity for overcoming complicity.

(Sources: February 13, 2014, DAILY TIDINGS, "Fukushima and the future of nuclear power" by Earth Talk's Roddy Scheer and Doug Moss; www.emagazine.com; www.caseyresearch.com; <http://wib.mit.edu/ceep/www>; March 10, 2012, THE ECONOMIST, "The Dream that Failed" by Oliver Morton; www.Economist.com/audiovideo/specialreports ; www.Economist.com/specialreports)

Pop Quiz

What parts of your local infrastructure are overdue for maintenance?

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